

WELLSFAK 18

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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25X1A and Berat-Cerevoda

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The condition of the national highways in Albania is in a very poor condition; they are rarely repaired due to lack of materials, specialized labor and financial means. By contrast, the military roads are not neglected. The following notes are given on two of these:

Kukes-Peshkop Military Road:

1. Beginning where the Kukes road branches off from that leading to Yugoslavia, the military road was constructed along the original cart road, which passes through the regions of Gostila and Manga, leading to the village of Bicaj. From Bicaj it follows the mule track which passes through Kolesjani; and turns immediately east from Point Q-775, and, still following the former mule track, crosses through the zone of Domen. Skirting along the eastern portion of the village of Resko, it subsequently branches off from the mule track. Following along an old path, it ascends half-way up the hill with a single turn, until it reaches the last houses of the village of Ujmishi, and the mule track alongside of which are constructed the houses which form part of that community. The military road descends half-way down the hill, until it reaches Point Q-343, and crosses the tributary of the Drin by means of an old bridge. From this bridge on the road makes use of an old mule track which touches upon Butha and Rset (Q-640); from Skavica it widens eastward, and as indicated in Attachment "A", reaches the metal bridge which crosses the river Drin. This bridge, known as the Doda Bridge, is of the American type, "a balestra," with a width of 3.40 meters, length 56 meters, wooden surface and a height of 10 meters from the water level. The destruction of this bridge would close up the road for a long period of time; due to the orographic characteristics of the terrain, as well as the steadily strong current of the river Drin, it would not be possible for two-way traffic to ford the river over a lengthy period of time. The first portion of the road (Kukes to the Doda bridge) is cut through rocky terrain, and even heavy rains would not prevent passage.
2. The second portion of the road (from the Doda bridge to Peshkop) is almost entirely constructed in clayey terrain, with all its inevitable consequences during the rainy season.

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3. From the Doda bridge to the Seta River, the road runs parallel to the Drin River, following the western banks at a maximum distance of approximately 500 meters. Even along this portion of the road it follows the trail of old paths or mule tracks; at Point 509 it passes the Krajezulli i Dardeta region, and crosses the Seta River by a metal bridge, "a balestra singolo"; the bridge is 18 meters long, 3.40 meters wide, wooden surface, 6 meters in height. The destruction of this bridge would close up this road only during the rainy season; at any other time the Seta River, in the immediate vicinity of the bridge, is easily fordable even by heavy objects. To the south of the river, the military road follows the mule track which runs along the northern periphery of Arrasi, and, following the first hilly lines to the west of the Drin, reaches the Muhuri region. It then crosses the Drin on a metallic bridge, "a balestra tipo 'doppio singolo,'" it has a length of 96 meters, width 3.40 meters, wooden surface, and a height of 9 meters from the water level. The destruction of this bridge would make it extremely difficult to cross the Drin River, which, even in the dry season, has a high water level and a very strong current.
4. From the Muhuri bridge the road reaches Peshkop, crossing through the Brezhan village.
5. The military road discussed above has an average width of 3 meters. The road, however, widens at frequent intervals to permit two-way traffic; this of course takes more time. Along the entire road there is a cover of solid gravel of approximately 20 centimeters in thickness. Repair work was completed recently and only in the Doda bridge--Peshkop portion of the road, during the rainy season, have there been breaks in the road due to the clayey nature of the terrain.

Berat-Cerevode Military Road:

6. Beginning to the east of Berat, the military road is constructed, for the first lap, along the terrain of the formerly existing secondary road which passes through Uzova, to the north of the Osumi River, where it joins with the mule track which starts at Vodica, and follows that mule track until it reaches Kula Celos. The road then follows along the path of the cart-road passing through Vertopi, and, hugging the north-east banks of the Osumi River, trends away from the old roadway to touch upon the villages of Bargullas and Novai; following the trail of the old Sirak and Dobrusha mule track, it reaches Cerevode.
7. The military road follows an almost level path until it reaches Vertopi; from this location to Cerevode it cuts through the hills, and is in a clayey terrain. For this reason, during the rainy season it is subject to landslides and blocking.
8. The road, which has a gravel surface of 20 centimeters, is 3.05 meters in length; the limited number of crossing points permits only two columns of motor vehicles along the entire length of the road (see Attachment "B").

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Attachment A

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